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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09 833,866	04 12/2001	Eldon Roth		5185
7590	09 08/2003			
Russell D. Culbertson Shaffer & Culbertson, L.L.P. Building One, Suite 360 1250 Capital of Texas Highway, S. Austin, TX 78746			EXAMINER	
			CORBIN, ARTHUR L	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		1761		

DATE MAILED: 09/08/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No. 09/833,866	Applicant(s) F 2012
Examiner ARTHUR L CARBON	Group Art Unit 1761

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07-18-01, 9-10-01, 1-23-02, 2-20-02

This action is **FINAL**.

Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.

Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement

Application Papers

The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is approved disapproved.

The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner

The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d).

All Some* None of the:

Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received
in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a))

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). 2, 3, 4

Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892

Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

Interview Summary, PTO-413

Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

Other _____

Office Action Summary

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 15-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 15-20 are misdescriptive in reciting "method" (line 1) since these claims depend upon a product claim.

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-13, 22 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roth (5,811,795, column 5, 6, 8 and 10) in view of Nakayama et al. Roth discloses adding ammonia gas to commuted meat to raise the pH to about 7.45. Moisture in the meat product absorbs the ammonia gas to form ammonium hydroxide. Subsequently, the meat is frozen and chipped for packaging. It would have been obvious to substitute ammonium hydroxide for the ammonia gas in Roth since ammonium hydroxide and ammonia gas are used alternatively to treat commuted meat, as evidenced by Nakayama et al (page 3). The ammonium hydroxide can optionally

include soy sauce and other flavorings. Further, the ammonium hydroxide will increase the meat moisture content since ammonium hydroxide contains water. (See applicant's claim 3). The blending, agitating or chipping in Roth (column 7, lines 40-45 and column 8, line 4) is a mechanical action. Shaping and molding comminuted meat products during packaging (claims 9 and 10) is conventional. Addition of ammonium hydroxide is equivalent to treating the meat with ammonia gas and ^{then} adding water (claims 22 and 23) since these ^{le} two steps form ammonium hydroxide in ^{situ} ~~the~~.

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 14-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Roth (5,871,795).

The packaged meat product in Roth, which has been chipped, is substantially equivalent to applicant's meat product. Any differences that may exist are deemed to be obvious.

7. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

8. Claims 1-23 are also rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of U.S. Patent No. 6,406,728. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the ammonia gas added in the claims of 6,406,728 will react with water present in the comminuted meat to form ammonium hydroxide.

9. Claims 1-23 are further provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of copending Application No. 09/965,337. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims of the instant application do not preclude removal of ammonia gas from the meat product, as occurs in the claims of 09/965,337.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

10. Claims 6-8 and 13 are objected to because of the following informalities: In claims 6, 7 and 13, "ammonia" should be changed to "ammonium". In claim 8, "the" should be added after "wherein" (line 1), and "the" (last line) should be change to "a". Appropriate correction is required.

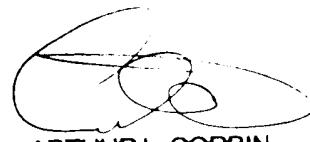
11. If the obviousness type double patenting rejections in paragraph Nos. 8 and 9 above are obviated, claim 21 would be allowed.

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication from the examiner should be directed to Arthur Corbin whose telephone number is (703) 308-3850. The examiner can generally be reached on Tuesday--Friday from 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and on alternate Mondays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on (703) 308-3959. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 305-7115 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

A. Corbin/dh
September 4, 2003



ARTHUR L. CORBIN
PRIMARY EXAMINER
9-5-03